PCPIR in Gujarat

*140. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gujarat Industrial Development Corporation has submitted an application for setting up Petroleum Chemical and Petrochemicals Investment Region (PCPIR) at Dahej in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Techno-feasibility of the proposal has been undertaken and presently the same is under circulation to departments concerned under the Government of India.

Decline in the wheat producing area

†777. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that wheat producing area has decreased in the country;

(b) if so, the main reasons therefor;

(c) the total estimated decrease in the wheat production;

(d) the measures being taken by Government to increase food production keeping in view the increasing population in the country; and

(e) by when these measures would be implemented and time by when wheat production would increase?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per the 2nd Advance Estimates, the area coverage under wheat is estimated at 271.99 lakh hectares which is 7.96 lakh hectares less than that during 2006-07. The area coverage under wheat declined duirng 2007-08 because of inclement weather conditions at the time of sowing in some States of the country. As per 2nd Advance Estimates released on 07.02.2008, the wheat production in the country is estimated to be 74.81 million tonnes which is 9.97 lakh tonnes less as compared to production of wheat during 2006-07.

(d) and (e) To increase the production of rice, wheat and pulses, Government has launched the National Food Security Mission (NFSM) from Rabi 2007-08. The NFSM targets to increase the production of rice by 10 million tonnes, wheat by 8 million tonnes and pulses by 2 million tonnes by the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan, i.e. 2011-2012.

New Farm Policy

778. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the concrete measures to achieve new farm policy relating to increasing farmers' net income, attraction and retention of youth in farming and processing of farm products, risk management to sustain the farmers during adverse circumstances, etc.;

(b) whether the problems faced by poor and marginal farmers like continuing farmers'

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

suicide, especially in Vidarbha have duly taken note of and farm policy has been structured on the basis of a holistic approach; and

(c) whether any monitoring mechanism has been established for periodical study of efficacy of new farm policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Many of the programmes/schemes which are already under implementation by various Central Ministries and Departments and State Governments are in line with the provisions contained in the National Policy for Farmers, 2007. The initiatives and schemes recently launched by the Government of India, like the National Food Security Mission and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana and the schemes included in the Eleventh Plan, augment the current schemes and programmes facilitating operationalization of the National Policy for Farmers. Schemes like promoting self employment among agricultural graduates, creation of market infrastructure and krishi vigyan kendras providing training and skill development in different aspects and activities relating to agriculture and allied sectors are likely to attract and retain youth in farming and processing of farm products, apart from improving the income of the farmers.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. Department of Agriculture and Cooperation has appropriate mechanism to monitor implementation of various programmes and schemes being implemented by the Department. Besides, the Agricultural Coordination Committee under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister oversees and coordinates the integrated implementation of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007.

Dry farming techniques

779. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the steps being taken to develop dry farming techniques in the country; and

(b) what new technologies are being developed to enhance dry farming in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) located at Hyderabad with network project of All India Coordinated Research Project for Dryland Agriculture (AICRPDA) and All India Coordinated Research Project for Agrometeorology (AICRPAM) with 25 centres each located across the country are working on developing dry farming techniques to answer location specific problems. These centres are working on resource characterization, crops and cropping systems, rainwater management, soil health and nutrient management, alternate land use systems, energy management, and transfer of technology.

(b) > Integration of soil, crop and climate database for contingency crop planning has been attempted and decision support software has been developed.

> Popularization of agro-weather advisory services is being taken up at weekly interval.

> Small farm mechanization is being popularized through Custom Hiring Centres operated by local youth after their skill enhancement. This will provide employment opportunities for the youth and also reduce drudgery of women.